

Nutrition Bites



Red Vegetables & Fruits

Red vegetables and fruits are loaded with powerful antioxidants, such as lycopene and anthocyanins, which fight heart disease and prostate cancer, decrease the risk for stroke, and can reduce the risk for macular degeneration (the leading cause of blindness in people aged 60 and older).¹

These powerful antioxidants neutralize free radicals, promoting cellular health (and therefore our overall health).

Powerhouse red vegetables include: red peppers, beets (also a purple food with other kinds of antioxidants), radishes, radicchio, rhubarb. Red fruits include: Tomatoes, cranberries, cherries, strawberries, raspberries, watermelon.

Featured Vegetable: Tomato

(scientifically, it is a fruit, but in the kitchen it is often considered a vegetable)

- ✓ antioxidant protection (lycopene)
- ✓ utilization of fat and amino acids (biotin)
- ✓ maintains water balance (Vitamin K)
- ✓ maintains proper immune function (Vitamin B6)
- ✓ production of hormones (niacin)
- ✓ promotes healthy vision (lycopene)
- ✓ high fiber
- ✓ protects from osteoporosis and atherosclerosis (folic acid)
- ✓ manufacture of red blood cells and hormones (pantothenic acid)
- ✓ anti-cancer properties (especially prostate and breast cancer, from the lycopene)



····· Cooked tomatoes have higher lycopene levels than raw.

····· Be careful not to cook tomatoes in aluminum or cast iron as the acid in them will bind with the metals producing a metallic flavor and potentially exposing you to toxins. The same goes for Teflon (ideally you won't cook anything in Teflon, as it can release toxins into any food when heated).

Sources:

1. WebMD < <http://www.webmd.com/food-recipes/features/red-foods-the-new-health-powerhouses?page=3>>

Wood, Rebecca. *The Whole Foods Encyclopedia*. Penguin Books, 2010.

Enjoy This Recipe:

Greek Inspired Salad

- 2 cups tomatoes, cut in wedges
- 2 cups cucumber, seeded peeled, cut in half & thinly sliced
- 2 cups green beans, trimmed & cut in half if long
- 1/2 cup very thinly sliced red onion
- 1/2 cup niçoise or kalamata olives, pitted & sliced in half
- 3 Tbs chopped fresh Italian parsley
- 3 Tbs chopped fresh basil
- 5 Tbs extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 Tbs white wine vinegar
- 1 tsp lemon zest
- 1/4 tsp each salt & pepper
- 1/2 cup feta cheese, crumbled (*optional*)

1 Blanch the beans until they are crisp tender and bright green. Cool immediately, drain well and place in a large bowl.

2 Add the rest of the vegetables, olives and chopped herbs and toss very gently..

3 Whisk together olive oil, white wine vinegar, lemon zest and salt and pepper. Taste and adjust seasonings with more lemon zest or S&P if needed.

4 Very gently toss vegetables with dressing. Taste once more and adjust seasonings. Garnish with crumbled feta and a few olives if desired.

Makes 6 servings | Total time: 1 hour